
1031 SIGNING AND MARKING OF SHARED-USE PATHS

Bicyclists operating on public roadways are recognized in State law as having the same rights and responsibilities as operators of vehicles. Nevertheless, shared-use paths, i.e. separated from motorized vehicular traffic and also used by pedestrians, skaters, joggers, etc., are also frequently used by bicyclists. Such shared-used paths are often placed parallel and adjacent to roadways used by motorized vehicles.

Experience has shown that signing and markings along shared-use paths do not assist adjacent drivers of motorized vehicles in anticipating (and avoiding collisions with) bicyclists when the motorists turns onto an intersecting roadway with which the adjacent shared-use path also intersects. For their part, bicyclists traveling on shared-use paths which parallel public roadways have been observed to take their right-of-way cues not from signs or traffic control devices which may be placed on the shared-use path, but from the traffic movements on the parallel roadway. Bicyclists also tend to ignore STOP signs along shared-use pathways which they perceive to be unnecessary or which conflict with the right-of-way along the parallel roadway.

Moreover, signs and markings placed along shared-use paths are sometimes interpreted as implying that bicyclists are expected to use the path instead of the adjacent roadway. This can lead to harassment of bicyclists who are otherwise safely and legally using the roadway.

It is therefore intended that sidewalks or shared-use paths on State right-of-way parallel and adjacent to roadways shall not be marked or signed for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists. This includes the use of centerline markings, BIKE ROUTE signs, STOP or YIELD signs, or similar devices.

R5-3 NO MOTOR VEHICLE signs may be installed at entrances to sidewalks or shared-use paths.

This policy does not apply to shared-use paths on independent alignments that are not parallel and adjacent to roadways and intersect State highways at locations away from roadway intersections, or in locations where the adjacent roadway is a controlled-access freeway where bicyclists have been prohibited in accordance with PGP 1030.

Exceptions to this policy may be made on the recommendation of the District Engineer with the approval of the State Traffic Engineer.